

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously amended) A cellulosic membrane, the membrane cast into a flat sheet from a dope comprising a cellulosic polymer and a solvent, the membrane having a first porous face having a first average pore diameter, a second porous face having a second average pore diameter, and a porous supporting structure therebetween wherein the supporting structure comprises a reticulated network of flow channels, wherein the membrane is substantially free of macrovoids, wherein the first and second average pore diameters having an asymmetry of at least about 2:1, and wherein the porous faces and the porous supporting structure comprise a network of structural surfaces capable of contacting a filter stream.

2. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the asymmetry between the average pore diameters of the first porous face and the second porous face is at least about 5:1.

3. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the asymmetry between the average pore diameters of the first porous face and the second porous face is at least about 10:1.

4. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the asymmetry between the average pore diameters of the first porous face and the second porous face is at least about 20:1.

5. (Original) The membrane of Claim 4, wherein the membrane has a molecular weight cut-off ranging from about 10k Daltons to about 300k Daltons.

6. (Original) The membrane of Claim 4, wherein the membrane has a molecular weight cut-off ranging from about 10k Daltons to about 50k Daltons.

7. (Original) The membrane of Claim 4, wherein the membrane has a molecular weight cut-off ranging from about 10k Daltons to about 30k Daltons.

8. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the cellulosic polymer comprises a cellulose ester.

9. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the cellulose ester comprises a cellulose acetate.

10. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the cellulose acetate is selected from the group consisting of cellulose diacetate, cellulose triacetate, cellulose acetate butyrate, cellulose acetate propionate, cellulose nitrate, methyl cellulose, and mixtures thereof.

11. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the cellulosic polymer on a surface of the membrane comprises cellulose.

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12. (Previously amended) The membrane of Claim 11, wherein the cellulose is produced via hydrolyzation of the membrane.

13. (Previously amended) The membrane of Claim 11, wherein the cellulose is produced via saponification of the membrane.

14. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the dope comprises a dispersion of the cellulosic polymer in the solvent.

15. (Original) The membrane of Claim 1, wherein the dope comprises a homogeneous solution of the cellulosic polymer in the solvent.

16-42. (Cancelled)

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SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW

Exhibits and/or Demonstrations

None

Identification of Claims Discussed

Claim 1.

Identification of Prior Art Discussed

U.S. 6,045,899 (Wang et al.) and U.S. 3,762,566 (Del Pico).

Proposed Amendments

None.

Principal Arguments and Other Matters

With respect to the pending rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, Applicants asserted that the specification conveyed with reasonable clarity to those skilled in the art that, as of the filing date sought, they were in possession of the invention, namely a cellulosic membrane that is, *inter alia*, “substantially free of macrovoids,” based on the disclosure of macrovoids in page 8 of the specification and in the Figures.

With respect to the pending rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wang et al., Applicants asserted, on the basis of the experimental results presented in the Declaration of I-fan Wang, that Wang et al. does not enable a cellulosic membrane that is “substantially free of macrovoids.”

With respect to the pending rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Del Pico, Applicants asserted that Del Pico does not teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations, including macrovoids, and thus does not anticipate or render obvious the claims.

Results of Interview

Agreement was reached on the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, which will be withdrawn on the basis of the language of “substantially free of macrovoids” based on the disclosure of macrovoids in page 8 of the specification and Figures 1-3.

Agreement was reached on the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the Del Pico reference, which will be withdrawn based on the Declaration of I-fan Wang and the fact that the Del Pico reference is silent on the macrovoids.

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Agreement was not reached on the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the Wang reference. The Examiner indicated that Applicants' arguments will require further consideration.